

Central Intelligence Agency



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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*(This is what SAD sent  
down to Bruce Tubbs  
at Treasury. Also included  
recent LAR article on  
Maluf and Tancredo.)*

The Brazilian Presidential Elections

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Brazil's next president is to be chosen by a 686-member electoral college, which is scheduled to convene in open session on 15 January. The college comprises 479 federal deputies, 69 senators, and six additional delegates from each of the 23 states. Electors vote individually, rather than--as in the US winner-take-all system--by state blocs.

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The electoral college system, devised by Brazil's military rulers in the 1960s, has been viewed by the current regime as a means of ensuring a measure of control over the transition to civilian rule and the choice of President Figueiredo's successor. Brasilia added the requirement for state delegates, who are to be chosen by the majority party in each state legislature, before the gubernatorial and congressional elections of 1982--the first direct popular elections since 1965. Fearing opposition victories in the industrial, urban states of the central and southern regions, the Figueiredo administration counted on the government party's traditional strength in the rural northeast to guarantee its dominance in a majority of the states. Although opposition parties won 10 governorships and control over several state legislatures, the government party emerged with a 30-vote margin in the electoral college.

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The Electoral Process

Events, however, have eroded the regime's ability to manipulate the coming election. A three-year recession, a financial payments crisis, and Figueiredo's inept leadership have sparked public dissatisfaction, galvanized the opposition, and encouraged rebellion within the government's own party. Although the administration managed to beat back an attempt earlier this year to provide for direct presidential elections, Figueiredo proved unable to impose his choice as the government party's

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candidate. Instead, Paulo Maluf--a Congressman reportedly detested by the President--carefully built a network of friends and allies through personal contacts and the distribution of favors and in August won the party's nomination. Moreover, Vice President Chaves led a defection of some 60 government party Congressmen to support Tancredo Neves, the former Governor of Minas Gerais and now the opposition candidate for president.

[redacted] 25X1

Swallowing his distaste for Maluf, Figueiredo ordered all government officials to support the party's candidate and sacked a cabinet officer who refused. [redacted] the 25X1

disintegration of the government party has continued. Several northeastern governors recently endorsed Neves, throwing into doubt the government party's ability to control the delegates from those states.

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The opposition's strategy has been to portray Maluf as a continuation of a discredited regime while identifying Neves with popular aspirations for change. Because the electoral college balloting will be open, the opposition apparently believes many Congressmen, all of whom face reelection in 1986, will hesitate to vote for Maluf. Public opinion polls consistently show a marked popular preference for Neves, by a margin of about 3 to 1, and the government party's candidate has met hostility at almost every campaign appearance. US Embassy and press reporting indicate that Neves has about a 100-vote lead among electoral college delegates.

[redacted] 25X1

Nonetheless, Maluf has not given up. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] Maluf is trying to satisfy the demands of individual 25X1

delegates in return for their support. He also is seeking procedural changes that would enhance his chances and [redacted] 25X1

remains confident he will triumph by a narrow margin. [redacted] 25X1

### Prospects

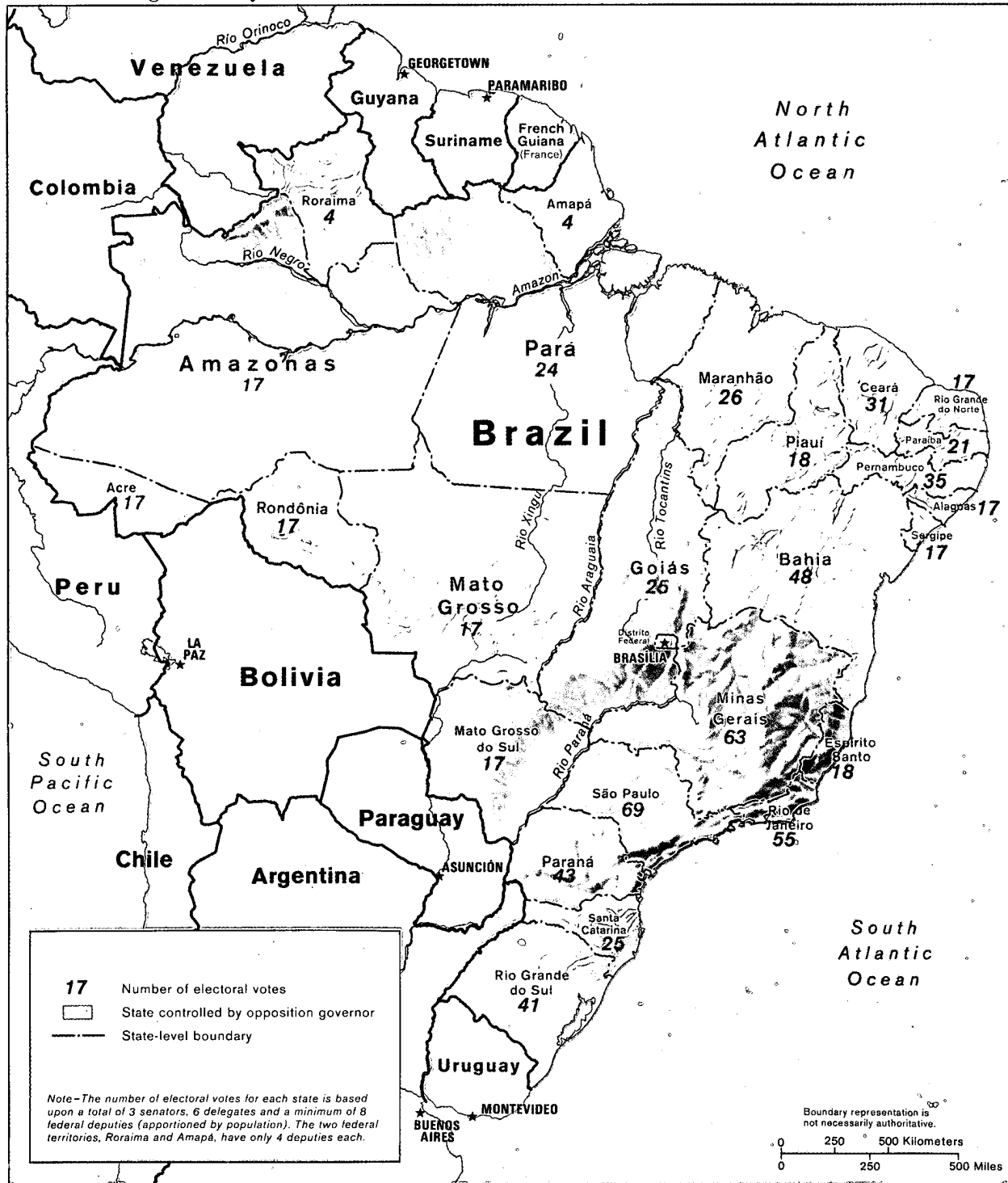
We believe Neves will win the election and be installed as Brazil's next president. Maluf, however, retains at least an outside chance of scoring an upset in the electoral college. He has overcome substantial odds in past contests, and his personal lobbying may attract enough delegates to edge Neves, particularly if any of his procedural stratagems pay off. [redacted] 25X1

A Neves victory almost certainly would be viewed as a vindication of public will, and the new administration would enjoy broad support. A triumph by Maluf, on the other hand, would be ascribed to the machinations of the unpopular Figueiredo regime, and much of the populace would be disaffected from the outset. [redacted] 25X1

Although the armed forces have shown concern for Neves's ties to leftist groups, they apparently are confident he will not threaten their institutional interests, and therefore they seem reconciled to an opposition victory. Nonetheless, the military clearly intends to play an active political role under the civilian regime, and its recent public warnings and moves against the left probably were intended to put both the traditional politicians and the extremists on notice that there will be no return to the radicalism of the early 1960s. [REDACTED]

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# Electoral College Votes by State



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